

NATIONAL

Neil O'Brien, India's first quizmaster, dies

Neil O'Brien, the pioneer of quizzing in India, passed away at his home in Kolkata. His death was announced by his son and Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien.

A former member of Lok Sabha, the senior O'Brien was also a three-time nominated Anglo-Indian MLA in West Bengal and an educationist. He was the chairman of the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) and managing director of Oxford University Press, India.

As a leader of the Anglo-Indian community, he was the president-in-chief of All-India Anglo-Indian Association and headed the Frank Anthony group of schools.

O'Brien conducted the first well-organized, formal quiz in 1967 at Christ the King Church Parish Hall in Calcutta.

ADB extends \$500-million loan for India's longest river bridge in Bihar

Asian Development Bank said it has approved \$500 million (approximately Rs 3350 crore) loan for constructing a bridge across Ganga.

Once built, the 9.8 km road bridge in Bihar will be country's longest river bridge. The bridge would provide vital transport links between the northern and southern parts of the state and with neighbouring country Nepal, ADB said in a release. The project will run for about 4 years and is expected to complete by the end of December 2020.

India joins Missile Technology Control Regime.

In a boost to its non-proliferation credentials, India joined the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) at a ceremony in South Block, attended by Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and diplomats from the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg missions.

The Ministry of External Affairs said India's MTCR membership would help in "furtherance of international non-proliferation objectives," even as a statement from the MTCR chair at The Hague said India would enjoy "full participation in organisational activities, including the October 2016 plenary of the regime in South Korea."

India had intensified efforts at gaining membership of the MTCR, the NSG, the Australia Group and

Wassenaar Arrangement since getting a waiver at the NSG in 2008.

Membership of these groups would help India trade more effectively in critical high tech areas.

MTCR aims at restricting the proliferation of missiles, complete rocket systems, unmanned air vehicles and related technology for those systems capable of carrying a 500 kilogramme payload for at least 300 kilometres, as well as systems intended for the delivery of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). India's membership had been blocked in 2015 by Italy, which seemed to link it to the standoff over the detention of the Italian marines. With the return of the second marine, Salvatore Girone, to Rome on May 29, the sources said, "Italy is no longer blocking the consensus."

China, which stonewalled India's entry into the 48-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) at the just-concluded Seoul plenary, is not a member of 34-nation MTCR.

Xerxes Desai, founder of Titan, dies

Xerxes Sapur Desai, the man who founded Titan Co. Ltd and made it an internationally renowned Indian watch brand, is no more.

A graduate of Bombay and Oxford Universities, Desai played a key role in introducing India to its first quartz watch in the late 80s when he set up Titan Co. Ltd (part of Tata Sons), after enduring years of resistance from state-owned and now defunct HMT Watches

Cabinet clears 23.5% hike in pay for Central govt. staff

The BJP-led NDA government announced an overall increase of 23.5 per cent for over one crore government employees and pensioners in line with the Seventh Pay Commission's recommendations, which left most services dissatisfied. The hikes will come with the August paychecks and be paid with effect from January 1, 2016. The arrears for the six months will be disbursed during the current financial year (2016-17) itself.

In November 2015, within the overall hike of 23.55-per cent, the pay panel had recommended increases of 16% in pay and 24 per cent in pensions. The starting salary for new recruits at the lowest level has been raised to Rs. 18,000 from Rs. 7,000 per month. Freshly recruited Class I officers will receive Rs. 56,100. This reflects a compression

ratio of 1:3.12 signifying that the pay of a Class I officer on direct recruitment will be three times the pay of an entrant at the lowest level.

The approved maximum pay, drawn by the Cabinet Secretary, is Rs. 2.5 lakh per month (against the current Rs. 90,000), higher than the salaries drawn by MPs. To examine the concerns employees have raised, the Union Cabinet decided to set up four committees: The first will look into the implementation issues anticipated and the second one will go into the likely anomalies. Another one will further examine the recommendations on allowances, which have largely been kept on hold. The fourth will suggest measures for streamlining the National Pension System.

Vishwanathan assumes charge as new RBI Deputy Governor

N.S. Vishwanathan took over as the new Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor who will be entrusted with overseeing banking and financial sector regulations.

Mr. Vishwanathan, who was Executive Director with the central bank before his elevation, replaced Harun R. Khan, who retired on turning 62.

A career central banker, Mr. Vishwanathan, 58, joined RBI in 1981. His areas of expertise include regulation and supervision of banks, non-banking finance companies and cooperative banks, currency management, foreign exchange and human resources management.

Born on June 27, 1958, Mr. Vishwanathan holds a Master's in Economics from the Bangalore University.

The central bank has four Deputy Governors — two from within the ranks (the other being R. Gandhi) and one commercial banker (S.S. Mundra) and an economist to head the monetary policy department (Urjit Patel).

Govt frames draft model law to allow shops to open round the clock

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said that the Cabinet has approved the Model Shops and Establishment (Regulation of Emp & Conditions of Service) Bill 2016. The bill will now be sent to States and Union Territories. It will cover establishments employing 10 or more workers except manufacturing units

To provide freedom to operate 365 days in a year and opening/closing time of establishment. This could mean that shops and establishments can operate 24/7. Women to be permitted during night shift, if necessary amenities and adequate protection of their dignity exists.

In Tashkent, Modi engages China on NSG membership

As India makes a strong bid for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Tashkent and is understood to have sought China's support for it, seen as very crucial to take forward the process.

The outcome of the meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi will determine the proceedings of the NSG's two-day plenary that began in Seoul.

Mr. Modi arrived in Tashkent to a warm welcome as he kicked off a two-day visit to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with the aim of expanding India's engagement with the China-dominated grouping in areas of security, defence and energy. In the two-day summit, the SCO will start the process of India's accession to the grouping as a full-fledged member, along with Pakistan.

Union Cabinet gives approval to five new IITs; ISM Dhandab to be IIT

Five new IIT . will come up at Tirupati, Palakkad, Dharwar, Bhilai, Goa and Jammu while ISM Dhanbad will also be upgraded to an IIT.

The Union Cabinet which met gave its ex post facto approval to amend The Institutes of Technology Act, 1961 for incorporation of new IITs at Tirupati (AP), Palakkad (Kerala), Dharwar (Karnataka), Bhilai (Chhattisgarh), Goa, Jammu (Jammu and Kashmir) and conversion of Indian School of Mines (ISM), Dhanbad to an IIT under the law.

The amendment will also help convert ISM, Dhanbad into an IIT by bringing it into the ambit of the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961.

Sunil Lanba takes charge as Navy chief

Admiral Sunil Lanba took charge as the Chief of Naval Staff in New Delhi as the current CNS Admiral R.K.Dhowan retired after four decade of service.

On May 6, 2016, the government appointed Lanba, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command as the Chief of Naval Staff. Admiral Lanba, 58, is a qualified specialist in navigation and direction course and will have a full three-year-term in office till May 31, 2019.

First batch of three female fighter pilots commissioned

Creating history, the first batch of three female pilots — Avani Chaturvedi, Bhawana Kanth and Mohana Singh were inducted in Indian Air Force fighter squadron.

On successful completion of their training, the trio were formally commissioned by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar. Being the first to break barriers, they were the cynosure of all eyes at the parade in their immaculate turnout. On completion of their Stage III training at Bidar in adjoining Karnataka next year, they will get to fly fighter jets like the Sukhoi and Tejas.

Ms. Avani from Satna in Madhya Pradesh was inspired by her brother who is in the Army and said she always wanted to conquer the skies and hence joined the Flying Club in her college.

Ms. Mohana Singh from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan boasts of a grandfather who was a Flight Gunner in the Aviation Research Centre and father who is a Warrant Officer in the IAF and is all excited to continue the family legacy of working in the armed forces. Ms. Bhawana Kanth, who hails from Darbhanga in Bihar and daughter of an officer in the Indian Oil Corporation, dreamt of flying planes from her childhood days and opted for the fighter stream after her Stage I training.

The achievement of the three is a significant milestone for the Indian military, as this is the first time it has permitted women into combat roles.

Last October, the government decided to open the fighter stream for women on an experimental basis for five years. But combat roles in the Army and the Navy are still off limits due to a combination of operational concerns and logistical constraints.

It's 100% FDI in most sectors, including defence

The NDA government announced, what it termed, a "radical liberalisation" of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) regime by easing norms for a host of important sectors including defence, civil aviation and pharmaceuticals, opening them up for complete foreign ownership.

The decision's timing assumes significance as it comes soon after Raghuram Rajan's announcement that he won't be seeking another term as the Reserve Bank of India Governor. The governor's decision days before the possible exit of Britain from the European Union, had triggered fears that India's growth narrative could unravel.

While the Opposition Congress termed the decisions as a "panic reaction" that would not have happened had Mr Rajan not dropped the bombshell, Commerce and Industry minister Nirmala Sitharaman stressed the announcement had nothing to do with the RBI governor's decision.

The decision on FDI reforms, taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also included paving the way for companies such as Apple Inc to immediately set shop in India. However, the government has tightened rules for

such companies producing items with cutting-edge and state-of-art technology — by giving them only a three-year blanket exemption from the 30 per cent local sourcing norm over and above the five years where the 30 per cent procurement requirement would have to be met as an average of five years' total value of the goods purchased. This is to ensure that they manufacture in India rather than making profits through just trading activities. In defence, foreign investment beyond 49 per cent (and upto 100 per cent) has been permitted through the government approval route, in cases resulting in access to modern technology in the country. The condition of access to 'state-of-art' technology in the country has been done away with, as many foreign investors had complained about the ambiguity regarding that term.

The decisions included permitting 100 per cent FDI under government approval route for trading, including through e-commerce, in respect of food products manufactured or produced in India, bringing into effect the proposal made in the Budget 2016-17. To promote the development of pharmaceutical sector, the government has permitted up to 74 per cent FDI under automatic route in existing pharmaceutical ventures. It added that the government approval route will continue beyond 74 per cent FDI and upto 100 per cent in such brown-field pharma.

The government has permitted 100 per cent FDI in India-based airlines. However, a foreign carrier can only own upto 49 per cent stake in the venture, and the rest can come from a private investors including those based overseas. This is expected to bring in more funds into domestic airlines. To boost airport development and modernisation, 100 per cent FDI in existing airport projects has been allowed without government permission, from 74 per cent permitted so far. The move comes close on the heels of the new civil aviation policy that relaxed norms for domestic carriers to fly abroad.

Narayanasamy to be Puducherry CM

Almost 10 days after the results of the elections to the 30-member Puducherry Assembly were announced, AICC general secretary and former Union Minister of State V. Narayanasamy was unanimously elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party to become the next Chief Minister of the Union Territory.

Mr. Narayanasamy did not contest in the Assembly polls. The announcement came after central observers, Sheila Dikshit and AICC general secretary Mukul Wasnik, met Congress MLAs.

India's first Mr Universe Manohar Aich passes away

104-year-old bodybuilder Manohar Aich, who was once a household name in Bengal after becoming India's first Mr Universe in 1952, died.

Aich, who turned 104 on March 17, had become India's first Mr Universe when he won the 1952 National Amateur Body-Builders' Association Universe Championships.

Born in the district of Comilla (now in Bangladesh), Aich, at just four feet and 11 inches, was not the tallest of men.

But encouraged by English officer Reub Martin, Aich took up bodybuilding and made this his passion during his stint at the Royal Air Force under British colonial rulers.

He also went on to serve jail term when some years later he protested against colonial oppression, something which Aich considered as "turning point" in his life. Impressed by his dedication, jail authorities had in fact offered him special diet, he had said. The following year, he attempted the Mr Universe title in London only to finish runner-up but a determined Aich did not return. He returned only after winning the coveted title in 1952.

His secret to longevity, Aich had said, was his abstinence from smoking and drinking.

India fifth largest producer of e-waste: Study/Research

India, which has emerged as the world's second largest mobile market, is also the fifth largest producer of e-waste, discarding roughly 18.5 lakh tonnes of electronic waste each year, a study says.

Telecom equipment alone accounts for 12 per cent of the e-waste, a joint study by Assocham-KPMG said. The rising levels of e-waste generation in India have been a matter of concern in recent years. With more than 100 crore mobile phones in circulation, nearly 25 per cent end up in e-waste annually, it said.

"India has surely emerged as the second largest mobile market with 1.03 billion subscribers, but also the fifth largest producer of e-waste in the world, discarding roughly 18.5 lakh metric tonnes of electronic waste each year, with telecom equipment alone accounting for 12 per cent of the e-waste," the study said.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified e-waste management rules, 2016, in which producers are for the first time covered under extended producers' responsibility (EPR).

Modi approves raise in doctors' retirement age to 65 years

Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the retirement age of 65 years for doctors of central services, in an aim to strengthen the healthcare sector in the country, said an official statement. It said the move will enable the government to retain experienced doctors for a longer period, and to provide better services in its public health facilities, particularly to the poorest, who are entirely dependent on public facilities.

The decision comes after Prime Minister Modi's announcement at his Saharanpur rally recently that the retirement age of government doctors would be raised to 65 years.

Rahul Johri will become BCCI's first CEO

In a major step to create an impression of itself as a professional set-up, the BCCI has announced that Rahul Johri will be its first-ever chief executive officer. After spending two decades in the media industry, Johri will assume his new role on June 1. Johri's appointment is largely perceived as a fall-out of the Supreme Court-appointed Justice R.M. Lodha panel's recommendations for administrative reforms in Indian cricket.

Jews in Maharashtra get minority status

Jews in Maharashtra are now a minority community. The State Cabinet approved the decision to grant minority status to the Jews, a demand pending for many years. The decision is based on the Maharashtra State Minorities Commission Act, 2004, which empowers the government to declare a community minority.

In October 2006, the State government declared Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains as religious minorities.

According to the application made by the Indian Jewish Federation to the government, the Jewish population in the State stood at 2,000-2,500.

However, the government does not have any official number of the Jewish population because the community was counted among the other religions. Now, the Jews can be counted independently as a religious minority. They can avail of all the schemes meant for minorities.

Mathura violence: Akhilesh Yadav sets up one-man judicial probe panel

Akhilesh Yadav government constituted a one-member judicial commission headed by retired Allahabad High Court judge, **Mirza Imtiyaz Murtaza**. The commission, which will be given an office in Lucknow, has been asked to complete the inquiry in two months.

UNCTAD Report on FDI: India remains at 10th position

According to numbers in the World Investment Report (WIR) 2016, brought out by the United Nations Council for Trade and Development (Unctad), India's FDI picked up from \$35 billion in 2015 to \$ 40 billion in 2016, that is an increase of around 25.7%. However, the FDI pickup into India pales in comparison to the global flows which picked up by 38% from \$ 1277 billion to \$ 1762 billion during the period.

Consequently India ranking among the top FDI destination remained stagnant at the 10th position in 2014 and 2015. Moreover India's gains is also overshadowed by the increases made by other major global recipients. In fact at least 5 of the top 10 investment destinations fared better than India. These include countries like the United States where FDI increased by 255% from \$ 107 billion to \$ 380 billion, Hong Kong where it shot up by 53.5% from \$114 to \$ 175 billion.

So while India's ranking among the top FDI destination had remained unchanged at the 10th level in 2014 and 2015 the United States ranking went up from 3rd to 1st, that of Ireland from 11th to 4th, Netherlands from 8 to 5 and Switzerland from 38 to 6.

Malabar exercise begins near islands contested by China

At a time of increased volatility in China's relations with its oceanic neighbours as well as India's own parleys for China's support to gain entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the navies of India, Japan and the U.S. on started the annual Malabar naval exercises in Japan, close to islands contested by China. This also comes just after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the U.S. during which India was declared a major defence partner of the U.S. The location of the war games, which will be conducted over hundreds of miles, is of particular interest as they are not very far from the Air Defence Identification Zone imposed by China over the East China Sea in November 2013, including the Senkaku Islands, controlled by Japan but claimed by Beijing, and the nine dash line. The exercise also comes at a time of increased sighting of Chinese submarines in India's own backyard, close to Sri Lanka.

Govt notifies setting up of company law tribunal

The government has notified the setting up of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).

"This comes into effect from June 1," said a statement from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Former

Supreme Court Judge SJ Mukhopadhaya has joined as Chairperson of the NCLAT and former Chief Justice Jammu and Kashmir High Court MM Kumar has joined as the President of the NCLT.

"With the constitution of the NCLT, the Company Law Board constituted under the Companies Act, 1956 stands dissolved," said the release. Initially, NCLT will have 11 Benches, two at New Delhi and one each at Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai, it added.

Narendra Modi Social Programmes for Two Years

In broad terms, two features distinguish social sector strategy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. First, it endeavours to make the existing programs more efficient by cutting leakages. And second, it gives priority to empowerment over entitlement.

Jana Dhana Yojana

Early in its tenure, the government achieved a major success in financial inclusion with empowerment through Prime Minister's Jana Dhana Yojana. This scheme proposed to give a bank account to every family. The program entered the Guinness Book of Records for opening 1.8 crore accounts in one week from 23 to 29 August 2014. By May 2016, the scheme had opened 21.74 crore accounts with Rs. 37,445 crore in deposits.

Aadhar – Direct Benefit Transfer

Alongside, the Prime Minister not only took the pragmatic decision of retaining and rapidly expanding the Aadhaar biometric identification program but also accelerated its deployment for cutting wasteful expenditure in the delivery of social programs. Recently, legislation has been passed that empowers the government to require the beneficiary of services financed from the Consolidated Fund of India to provide her Aadhaar identity number. In turn, the government can link the beneficiary's Aadhaar identity number and bank account to which benefits are transferred. This direct benefit transfer (DBT) instrumentality complemented by Aadhaar seeding of the bank account eliminates the possibility of benefits accruing to multiple accounts of the same beneficiary or to ghost accounts.

Subsidized LPG Programme

To-date, an estimated 3.5 crore multiple or ghost beneficiaries have been eliminated from the LPG rolls. During 2014-15 alone, this resulted in savings of Rs. 14,672 crore. In MGNREGA, similar weeding out of multiple or ghost beneficiaries resulted in a savings of Rs. 3,000 crore in 2015-16. This amount is a little below 10% of the total MGNREGA allocation. In PDS, an estimated Rs. 10,000 crore has been saved by elimination of 1.6

For the first time, the government has resolved to bring LPG cylinders to these households. The government has launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjawal Yojana under which 5 crore BPL [below poverty line] households will be provided subsidized LPG cylinders over the next three years. The target for the current fiscal year is 1.5 crore households. The scheme is being financed in part from the savings generated through voluntary surrender of LPG subsidy by existing richer households. At Prime Minister's call, one crore richer households have already given up this subsidy.

Atal Pension-Insurance Scheme

In the Budget 2015-16, the government launched Atal Pension Scheme to provide a minimal insurance cover to workers in unorganized sector. Under the scheme, the central government co-contributes the lower of 50% of the total contribution and Rs. 1,000 per annum to each subscriber account for a period of 5 years. Depending on his contribution, a subscriber under the age of 40 receives the fixed monthly pension of Rs. 1000 to Rs 5000 at the age of 60 years.

In parallel, the central government has introduced Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (insurance against accidental death) and Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (insurance against death). The former provides cover for Rs. 2 lakh in case of death and Rs. 1 lakh in case of partial disability to individuals 18 to 70 years of age for a premium of Rs. 12 per annum. The latter covers individuals between 18 and 50 years for Rs. 2 lakh at a premium of Rs. 330 per year. By 9 May 2016, 9.4 Crore beneficiaries had enrolled under the Suraksha Bima Yojana and 3 crore under the Jeevan Jyoti scheme. Enrolment in Atal pension Yojana at 20 lakh was significantly lower.

The Budget 2016-17 announced three major initiatives related to health: insurance, Jan Aushadhi scheme and dialysis programme. Under the health insurance scheme, coverage for Rs. 1 lakh is provided against hospitalization expenditure. For senior citizens, there is additional coverage of Rs. 30,000. The government will cover eight crore families from economically weaker section free of charge through an Aadhaar-linked programme. Under Jan Aushadhi programme, the government will open 3,000 stores nationwide to provide low-cost generic drugs. With 2.2 lakh end stage renal disease patients added each year, the government has also announced a programme to provide dialysis services in all district hospitals.

Swachh Bharat Programme

The discussion of social sector reform and programmes will be incomplete without a brief reference to the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). The mission is not only critical for a healthy India

but is also essential to creating a modern India. Among other things, it proposes to make India open defecation free by 2 October 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Toilets built have risen from 5 million in 2013-14 to 5.88 million in 2014-15 and 12.7 million in 2015-16.

This documentation is by no means complete. There is much else being done via housing for all, Prime Minister's Krishi Sinchai Yojana, livelihood mission and much else that touches people's lives. The distinguishing feature of the policies under the present government is that they promise to sustain high growth in the GDP, revenues and social spending and deliver social services more efficiently and effectively.

India ranks low at 141st place in global peace index

India was ranked low at 141st place on a Global Peace Index — making it less peaceful than countries like Burundi, Serbia and Burkina Faso — with violence taking a USD 680-billion toll on its economy in 2015.

In a ranking of 163 countries, compiled by global think tank Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), Syria has been named as the least peaceful, followed by South Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. On the other hand, Iceland was ranked as the world's most peaceful country, followed by Denmark and Austria.

India has moved up two position, from 141st last year, but the study said the country's peace score has "deteriorated" over the past year — which means the slight rise in ranking could be due to worse performance of others.

INTERNATIONAL

'United' Kingdom leaves EU in the historic vote (Very important)

The United Kingdom opted for a momentous change of course by voting to leave the European Union in a closely-fought referendum held. The 'Leave' side won decisively with 52 per cent of the vote in the high-turnout vote, which overturned opinion polls that predicted a slender margin for 'Remain'. This is the second referendum on Britain's relationship with the European project. In 1975, in a referendum on whether the U.K. should stay or leave the European Community (Common Market) Area, the country voted for staying in with a resounding 67.2 per cent vote.

Prime Minister David Cameron, the architect of the referendum and a passionate supporter of Britain within the European Union, announced that as a measure of respect for the "will of the people" he would be stepping down as Prime Minister

in October.

The referendum saw a turnout of 72 per cent, the highest in any election since 1992, 'Leave' won 17,410,742 votes and 'Remain' 16,141,241, with all but the regions of London, Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to leave.

The markets have predictably reacted sharply to the referendum result with the pound falling to its lowest since 1985. Other major currencies have also shown volatility especially the Euro that has seen its worst fall against the dollar. Nigel Farage, leader of the United Kingdom Independence party that fought the referendum by invoking fears of unchecked immigration, called for the celebration of the day as "Independence day."

Ethiopia, Bolivia, Sweden elected non-permanent UNSC members

The UN General Assembly elected Ethiopia, Bolivia and Sweden as non-permanent members of the Security Council for a two-year period beginning in January, 2017.

The 193-member UN body conducted the elections for five non-permanent seats, which included one seat for the African Group, one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific small island developing states, one seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and two seats for the Western European and Others Group.

The two-year terms of the new members will begin January 1 next year and run through December 31, 2018. Ethiopia got 185 votes, while Bolivia got 183 and Sweden garnered 134 votes.

A second round of voting is underway to elect a member between Kazakhstan and Thailand in the Asia Pacific group and Italy and the Netherlands in the Western European group.

The UN Security Council consists of 10 non-permanent members who sit alongside the five permanent, veto-wielding members - China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.

The non-permanent seats are allocated according to a rotation pattern set by the Assembly back in 1963, to ensure a proportionate representation over time from different parts of the world: five from African and Asian states; one from Eastern European states; two from Latin American states; and two from Western European and Other states.

This year, the one seat for the African Group - currently held by Angola - is uncontested, with only one candidate - Ethiopia - put forward by the regional group. The same holds true for the seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States - currently held by Venezuela - for which Bolivia has been nominated.

However, the seat for the Asia-Pacific Group - currently held by Malaysia - is being contested

this year, with two member states - Kazakhstan and Thailand - presenting their candidacies.

Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden are competing for two seats under the Western European and Others Group - which are currently held by New Zealand and Spain.

With the exception of Kazakhstan, all competing candidate countries have served on the council in the past. The new members will join the five other non-permanent members of the council whose terms expire at the end of 2017: Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay.

To secure a non-permanent seat on the council, a candidate country must garner the votes of two-thirds of the member states present at the General Assembly session. If all 193 UN member states are present tomorrow, this means winning a seat will require 129 positive votes.

British PM David Cameron resigns

Prime Minister David Cameron announced he will resign after Britons voted to leave the European Union despite his campaign to keep it in the bloc. Mr. Cameron promised to try to "steady the ship" over the next months and did not give a precise timetable for his departure but said a new leader should be installed by early October.

He said his successor should trigger the formal process for Britain to leave the European Union. Flanked by his wife Samantha, Mr. Cameron said he had fought to retain Britain's membership of the EU "head, heart and soul — I held nothing back".

Britons decided by 52 percent to 48 percent in favour of quitting the EU, a margin of more than one million votes, final results showed.

Panama Canal and its newly expanded locks

Opened on Aug. 15, 1914, the Panama Canal was constructed by the United States between 1904 and 1913 at a cost of \$375 million, building on an earlier, French-led effort that fizzled. An estimated 20,000 workers died during French control of the project, many due to tropical diseases such as malaria, and 5,600 more perished during U.S. construction. The canal revolutionized global sea traffic by replacing long voyages around Cape Horn at the tip of South America.

The \$5.25 billion project was initially scheduled for completion in October 2014, roughly coinciding with the canal's 100th anniversary, but was delayed by slow approvals for concrete to use in the locks, labor strikes and leaks detected late last year. The expansion includes two new sets of lock complexes, one on the Pacific coast on the outskirts of Panama City and one on the northern coast at Colon.

Iceland elects President in vote eclipsed by football fever

Iceland voted in a presidential election expected to see newcomer Gudni Johannesson waltz to victory with voters angry at the establishment — though more excited about the country's Euro football debut.

Mr. Johannesson, a 47-year-old history professor and political commentator who has never held public office, only decided to run after the so-called Panama Papers leak in April which detailed offshore accounts and implicated several senior Icelandic politicians, including the prime minister who was forced to resign. Mr. Johannesson has vowed to restore Icelanders' faith in the system after years of public anger toward politicians for miring the country in scandals and financial woes.

Indian-American map experts sweep National Geographic Bee

Rishi Nair, 12-year-old Indian American student, has won the prestigious \$50,000 National Geographic Bee competition in which Indian-origin contestants maintained their dominance by sweeping all the top three slots.

Nair, a sixth grader from Florida, took top honours at the 28th annual National Geographic Bee held at the National Geographic headquarters here. As National Geographic Bee champion, Nair received a \$50,000 college scholarship and a lifetime membership in the National Geographic Society. He also wins a trip to Alaska and Glacier Bay National Park. This is the fifth consecutive year that an Indian-American has won the prestigious national tournament.

42nd G7 Summit held at Kashiko Island, Japan

The 42nd G7 summit was held on May 26 and 27, 2016 at the Shima Kanko Hotel in Kashiko Island, Shima, Mie Prefecture, Japan.

The United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom make up the Group of Seven (G7). This group meets every year to discuss various important issues like global economic governance, international security and energy policy. The European Union is also represented within the G7.

These participant countries make up more than 64 per cent of the net global wealth and are the seven major advanced economies as reported by the International Monetary Fund.

The major functions of the G7 include strategising economic policies among participant countries, to monitor developments in the world economy and assess economic policies.

Leaders of major international organisations and of a select group of developing countries attend

“outreach” sessions, held once the G-7 summit meeting ends.

Germany parliament labels Areminan killings as ‘genocide’

The German Parliament overwhelmingly approved a motion labelling the killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks a century ago as genocide, a decision that Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said would “test” relations between the two countries at a sensitive time.

The resolution, which was put forward by Chancellor Angela Merkel's governing coalition of right and left and the opposition Greens, was passed with support from all the parties in Parliament. In a show of hands, there was one abstention and one vote against.

Turkey denies that the killings that started in 1915 were genocide and contends the dead were victims of civil war and unrest. Ankara also insists the death toll has been inflated. The number of victims is estimated at between 8,00,000 and 1.5 million.

PM Modi to inaugurate Friendship Dam in Afghanistan

Marking the completion of a landmark Afghan development project, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Afghan-India Friendship Dam during his visit to Afghanistan.

“Prime Minister and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani will jointly inaugurate the Afghan-India Friendship Dam on June 4, in Herat province. The completion of the dam project represents the culmination of work by 1500 Indian and Afghan engineers and other professionals in very difficult conditions,” MEA Spokesperson Vikas Swarup said.

The Afghan-India Friendship Dam will irrigate 75,000 hectares of farmland in arid parts of western Afghanistan. Originally constructed in 1976, the reservoir was damaged in the Afghanistan civil war. The Afghanistan government in 2015 changed the name of the project from Salma dam to Afghan-India Friendship Dam.

Swiss Voters reject basic free income for all

In a referendum, the Swiss have rejected, 76.9% to 23.1%, a proposal for the government to pay every adult citizen a minimum income of 2,500 francs a month and every child 625 francs. That such a vote took place is a significant development, indicative of the changes taking place in society. The reason cited in support of the proposal is that automation, robots and globalization are taking away jobs and giving people a minimum living wage, regardless of what they do, is likely to free up people to pursue their passion, delivering

them from the drudgery of struggling to earn at least a subsistence.

SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya, ICICI Bank head Chanda Kochhar among 4 Indians in Forbes' 'Most Powerful Women' list

Four Indian women, including SBI Managing director Arundhati Bhattacharya and ICICI Bank Managing director Chanda Kochhar, are in the new list of Forbes' world's 100 most powerful women who are building billion-dollar brands and calling the shots in the financial markets.

The Forbes '100 Most Powerful Women' in the world list 2016, topped by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, includes PepsiCo chief Indra Nooyi, Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and HT Media head Shobhana Bhartia.

Forbes said this year's most powerful women are the "smartest and toughest female business leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, scientists, philanthropists and CEOs making their mark in the world.

Poland, NATO hold biggest military drill amid Russia tensions

Poland and its NATO partners kicked off their largest-ever joint military exercises aimed at shoring up security on the alliance's eastern flank amid the West's worst standoff with Russia since the end of the Cold War.

More than 31,000 soldiers from 24 NATO and former-Soviet "Partnership for Peace" states including Ukraine are taking part in the manoeuvres, held biannually across Poland since 2006.

Some 14,000 US troops will join 12,000 Polish soldiers and around 1,000 from Britain for the exercises involving some 3,000 vehicles, 105 planes and 12 naval vessels.

US Army Chief of Staff Mark Milley said the American presence "demonstrates that we are shoulder to shoulder with the Polish people" and that the exercises would "improve our collective readiness."

They come a month ahead of a "landmark" NATO summit in Warsaw set to seal its largest revamp since the Cold War by deploying more troop rotations in eastern European members spooked by Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

Russia is fiercely opposed to the move, billed by NATO as its "deter and dialogue" strategy.

Russia has long objected to NATO's expansion in its Soviet-era back yard and in 1997 NATO formally agreed not to install permanent bases in former Warsaw Pact states.

The World's 100 Highest-Paid Athletes 2016: Forbes' List

The 100 top-earning athletes around the globe

cumulatively banked \$3.15 billion over the last 12 months, a notch below last year's record total of \$3.22 billion, which was fueled by the blockbuster fight between Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao. The two boxers ranked first and second last year with a combined \$460 million. This year the two earned \$68 million and ranked No. 16 (Mayweather) and No. 63 (Pacquiao). Overall earnings for the top 100 were down, but endorsement income rose 11% to \$924 million.

Real Madrid star Cristiano Ronaldo lands the top spot with earnings of \$88 million. This is the first year since 2001 someone besides Mayweather or Tiger Woods ranked first. It is tougher than ever to crack the top 100 with the cutoff up \$2 million to \$20.8 million.

Athletes from 10 different sports made the cut. Baseball players were the most dominant with 26 led by Clayton Kershaw at No. 33 with \$32 million. The NFL (21 athletes), NBA (18) and soccer (12) were the next most prolific sports. The explosion in TV money is goosing salaries in these team sports. Seven tennis players made the cut along with six race car drivers, five golfers and three boxers. Track and mixed martial arts both placed one athlete with Usain Bolt at No. 32 (\$32.5 million) and Conor McGregor at No. 85 (\$22 million).

There are 23 countries represented among the top 100 with Americans (65) the most prevalent thanks to soaring salaries in baseball, basketball and football. Five Brits landed in the top 100 led by F1 driver Lewis Hamilton at No. 11 and \$46 million. Hamilton signed a contract extension to drive for Mercedes and won his second straight F1 World Championship.

Norway Becomes World's First Country to Ban Deforestation

Norway has become the first country to ban deforestation. The Norwegian Parliament pledged that the government's public procurement policy will be deforestation-free.

There are 1.6 million people who rely on forests for food, fresh water, clothing, medicine and shelter, according to the World Wildlife Fund. But people also see forests as an obstacle they must remove. Around 46,000 to 58,000 square miles of forest are lost each year—a rate equal to 48 football fields every minute.

Deforestation is estimated to contribute around 15 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Not only does deforestation contribute to climate change, it can also disrupt livelihoods and natural cycles, the World Wildlife Fund said. Removal of trees can disrupt the water cycle of the region, resulting in changes in precipitation and river flow, and contribute to erosion.

Microsoft agrees to buy LinkedIn for \$26.2 billion

Technology giant Microsoft said it will acquire professional networking platform LinkedIn in an all-cash transaction valued at \$26.2 billion.

Microsoft will acquire LinkedIn for \$196 per share in an all-cash deal valued at \$26.2 billion, inclusive of LinkedIn's net cash, Microsoft said in a statement. LinkedIn will retain its distinct brand, culture and independence, it added.

The transaction is expected to close this calendar year. "The LinkedIn team has grown a fantastic business centred on connecting the world's professionals. Together, we can accelerate the growth of LinkedIn as well as Microsoft Office 365 and Dynamics as we seek to empower every person and organisation on the planet," Microsoft chief Satya Nadella said.

Jeff Weiner will remain CEO of LinkedIn, reporting to Mr. Nadella. Reid Hoffman, Chairman of the board, co-founder and controlling shareholder of LinkedIn, and Weiner both fully support this transaction, the statement said. In India, LinkedIn has about 650 employees and R&D operations in Bengaluru.

LinkedIn started out in the living room of co-founder Hoffman in 2002 and was officially launched on May 5 in 2003.

LinkedIn has seen 19 per cent growth year-on-year to more than 433 million members worldwide while quarterly member page views rose 34 per cent to over 45 billion. Over 92 million users came from Asia and the Pacific region.

Microsoft will finance the transaction primarily through the issuance of new indebtedness. Upon closing, Microsoft expects LinkedIn's financials to be reported as part of Microsoft's Productivity and Business Processes segment.

In addition, Microsoft also reiterated its intention to complete its existing \$40 billion share repurchase authorisation by December 31, 2016, the same timeframe as previously committed. LinkedIn has more than 9,700 full-time employees and is headquartered in Mountain View, California. It has offices in 30 cities, including Bengaluru, Beijing, Chicago, Dubai, Dublin, Hong Kong and London.

Fijian elected UN General Assembly president

Peter Thomson of Fiji has been elected president of the next session of the UN General Assembly, which will choose the successor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In a keenly contested election, he polled 94 votes narrowly defeated Andreas Mavroyiannis of Cyprus who got 90. Under the system of regional rotation, it is the Asia-Pacific region's turn to hold the post and usually one candidate is proposed by the group whose turn

it is. This time the lack of a consensus sent election to a ballot by the 193-member General Assembly. Thomson will oversee the election of the next Secretary-General by the General Assembly in a process that will have a measure of transparency for the first time.

Climate change: Australian rodent may be first species to go extinct

Climate change appears to have driven to extinction an Australian Great Barrier Reef rodent, according to a new study, which suggests the species may be the first mammal lost to the global phenomenon. Extensive searches for the Bramble Cay melomys, a small rat-like animal, have failed to find a single specimen from its only known habitat on a sandy island in far northern Australia.

Researchers said the key factor behind the extinction was "almost certainly" ocean inundation of the low-lying cay, likely on several occasions, over the last decade which resulted in dramatic habitat loss.

Sunil Bharti Mittal elected as ICC Chairman

Sunil Bharti Mittal, Founder and Chairman, Bharti Enterprises, has been elected as the Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). He is the third Indian business leader to hold this position in ICC's near 100-year history.

He takes over from Terry McGraw, Chairman Emeritus of S&P Global, who will subsequently become ICC's Honorary Chairman. The ICC World Council elected the new leaders at a voting held in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Founded in 1919, ICC is the world's largest business organisation which represents private sector views to national governments and intergovernmental bodies around the world.

It advocates for free trade and market economy, working through a network of national committees and direct members in over 130 countries.

He is closely associated with spearheading the Indian industry's global trade, collaboration and policy. He has served on the Prime Minister of India's Council on Trade & Industry. He is also a member of the India-US, India-UK and India-Japan CEO Forums. He is Co-Chair of the India-Africa Business Council and India-Sri Lanka CEO Forum. He was the President of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the premier industry body in India in 2007-08.

Rodrigo Duterte wins Philippines presidential elections

Maverick anti-crime candidate Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte has won the Philippine presidential elections, following the withdrawal of his opponents.

Although the official result has not yet been declared, main rival Mar Roxas admitted defeat after polls gave Mr. Duterte an unassailable lead.

Mr. Duterte said he accepted the mandate with “extreme humility.” The 71-year-old stirred controversy during campaigning with his incendiary comments. He has credited his success to his tough stance on law and order.

Mars crater named after Nepal quake-hit village Langtang

A crater on Mars has been named after one of the villages worst hit by the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.

At least 215 people were killed in Langtang, a popular trekking site, when the April 25 quake triggered an avalanche that swamped the village. The International Astronomical Union has now named a 9.8 km (six mile) wide crater on Mars as Langtang. The researcher behind the move, Tjalling de Haas, said it was “a tribute” to the Nepali village.

New Chinese system named world’s top supercomputer

A new Chinese computer system that can make 93 quadrillions calculations per second has claimed the top spot on the list of the world’s most powerful supercomputers.

The computer called Sunway TaihuLight developed by the National Research Centre of Parallel Computer Engineering and Technology (NRCPC) is built entirely using processors designed and made in China. The supercomputer installed at the National Supercomputing Centre in China displaced Tianhe-2, an Intel-based Chinese supercomputer that has claimed the top 1 spot on the past six TOP500 lists. The closely watched list is issued twice a year.

Sunway TaihuLight is twice as fast and three times as efficient as Tianhe-2, which posted a performance of 33.86 quadrillions of calculations per second.

Titan, a Cray X40 system installed at the US Department of Energy’s (DOE) Oak Ridge National Laboratory, is now at the third position, with 17.59 quadrillions of calculations per second.

SoftBank’s Nikesh Arora to step down as CEO

Nikesh Arora, who was considered as a top contender to succeed SoftBank Group Corp. founder and CEO Masayoshi Son, will step down from his current post of President of the Japanese company. Mr. Son made it clear that Mr. Arora won’t get the top job in the near future. The development comes a day after a special committee, comprising independent members of the SoftBank Group board

of directors, gave Mr. Arora a clean chit in an internal investigation for alleged irregularities in SoftBank’s investments in Indian startups — Housing.com, a real-estate website and hotel-booking app Oyo Rooms.

Mr. Arora, 48, a former Google executive who made headlines as being one of the highest-paid company officials in the world, “will assume an advisory role,” from July, according to a company statement. He was under fire from shareholders over his compensation and they questioned some of his deals.

He said that Mr. Arora brought world-class execution skills to SoftBank, as evidenced by a myriad of investments made by the company over the last year. He said this included a complex monetisation of a stake in Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba. In May, SoftBank said that it plans to sell at least \$7.9 billion worth of its stake in Alibaba.

Mr. Son also credited Mr. Arora for playing a key role in helping SoftBank to sell its stake in gamemaker Supercell, for a total return of \$ 7.3 billion. China’s largest internet company Tencent Holdings will lead an \$8.6 billion acquisition of Supercell.

Mr. Arora, joined SoftBank from Google, where he was the chief business officer, in September 2014. He worked as president and chief operating officer at the company. During his tenure, SoftBank invested in a set of growth-stage companies in India such as Snapdeal, Ola, Oyo, Grofers and Housing.

World’s longest tunnel opens in Switzerland (Important)

The world’s longest tunnel officially opened, with the trailblazing rail passage under the Swiss Alps aiming to ease transit through the heart of Europe. With political unity on the continent shaken by a massive influx of migrants and the looming threat of Britain’s European Union (EU) departure, Swiss President Johan Schneider-Amman said the tunnel would “join the people and the economies” of Europe. He spoke before the 57-kilometre Gotthard Base Tunnel (GBT) made its ceremonial first run with European leaders on board.

The passengers included German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Francois Hollande and Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi.

While the tunnel was entirely funded by non-EU member Switzerland, the bloc’s transport commissioner Violeta Bulc has hailed it as “a godsend” for the continent. It runs from Erstfeld in the central canton of Uri, to Bodio in the southern Ticino canton. Travel through the Alpine region, by rail or by road, requires taking a zigzag and undulating route.

The Gotthard Base Tunnel was designed to offer a better option for both private travellers and commercial freights.

When the full service opens in December, the tunnel will shave the train journey from Zurich to Milan in northern Italy down to two hours and 40 minutes, roughly an hour less than it currently takes.

It should also make rail freight more efficient — partly by supporting heavier cargo, which should reduce the number of smoke-spewing lorries on the roads, in turn improving traffic and curbing pollution.

The number of daily rail passengers is expected to increase from the current rate of 9,000 people to 15,000 by 2020, according to the Swiss federal railway service.

The rough design for a rail tunnel under the Gotthard Pass was first sketched by Swiss engineer Carl Eduard Gruner in 1947. But bureaucratic delays, concerns over the cost and other hurdles pushed back the start of construction until 1999.

The work took 17 years at a cost of more than 12 billion Swiss francs (\$12 billion, 11 billion euros). According to the Swiss rail service, it also took 43,800 hours of non-stop work by 125 labourers rotating in three shifts to lay the tunnel's slab track.

The ambitious venture was largely made possible by technical advances in tunnel-boring machines, which replaced the costly and dangerous blast-and-drill method.

The primary machine used to make the Gotthard tunnel was roughly 410-metres long and functioned like a mobile factory. It cuts through rock and throws the debris backwards while simultaneously placing the pre-formed segments of concrete that form the shape of the tunnel. A separate system grouts the pieces together.

With its official opening, the Gotthard Base Tunnel has surpassed Japan's 53.9-kilometre Seikan tunnel as the world's longest train tunnel.

AWARDS

Top Afghan Civilian award for Modi (Important)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with Amir Amanullah Khan Award, Afghanistan's highest civilian honour. He was bestowed the honour by President Ashraf Ghani after the inauguration of the landmark Afghan-India Friendship Dam.

"A true brotherhood is honoured. PM is awarded the Amir Amanullah Khan Award, Afghanistan's highest civilian honour," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson said.

During his speech after inaugurating the dam, Mr.

Modi also invoked Chisht-born Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti who settled down in Ajmer and is venerated by thousands of people visiting his shrine.

President Mukherjee awarded highest honour of Cote D'Ivoire

President Pranab Mukherjee has been accorded the highest honour of Cote D'Ivoire by its President Alassane Ouattara on his maiden visit to Abidjan. After an elaborate reception accorded at the airport, Mr. Mukherjee attended a banquet last evening hosted by Ouattara where he was accorded with Grand Cross National Order of the Republic of Cote D'Ivoire in a simple ceremony in the President's Palace.

Bharti Enterprises founder Sunil Mittal receives Harvard Alumni award

Bharti Enterprises founder and Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal has received this year's Harvard Business School Alumni Achievement Award.

The award, presented annually since 1968, is the highest honour the Harvard Business School confers on its alumni who have contributed significantly to their companies and communities while upholding the highest standards and values.

On receiving the award, Mittal credited the Harvard Business School's management programme with helping him create Bharti Airtel. Having served on the HBS Board of Dean's Advisors since 2010, Mittal said the School continues to lead in producing world-class business leaders.

Bhattacharya, 60, ranked 25th on the list, is facing her "most challenging test" yet with State Bank of India facing mounting bad loans, which stood at \$11 billion in December, Forbes said.

Kochhar comes in on the 40th spot and Forbes said as boss of the country's largest private-sector lender, Kochhar, 54 has to contend with the "current bane of India's banking system: bad loans."

Mazumdar-Shaw is ranked 77th on the list. The 63-year old "self-made" business leader positioned Biocon as a large player in insulin and her company is the only Asian firm ranked among the top 20 biotech employers worldwide by Science magazine. Nooyi is ranked 14th on the list and Forbes said in May 2016, she successfully side-stepped a proxy war with activist investor Nelson Peltz's Trian Fund, which had pressured the company to split, by adding another board member.

The list also includes Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton on the second spot, Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen (3), Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg (7), US First Lady Michelle Obama (13), Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu

Kyi (26), Queen Elizabeth II (29), Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (36), Nepalese President Bidya Devi Bhandari (52) and UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova (89).

SPORTS

Champions Trophy: India settle for silver, lose 1-3 in controversial shootout to Australia

India muffed three tries in the title-deciding shootout to settle for a silver medal in the 36th Hero Champions Trophy as they lost the final 1-3 against world champions Australia.

Only Harmanpreet Singh was able to score in the shootout, while SK Uthappa, SV Sunil and Surender Kumar all shot wide off the target. Just four attempts were required from the two teams as Australia had gained a winning 3-1 lead.

There was plenty of drama in the shootout as Beale's shot was re-taken after he failed to score and sought a video review. The video umpire asked the shot to be taken again, leaving Indian coach Roelant Oltmans fuming on the sidelines.

At the end of the match India protested against the second successful attempt awarded to Beale, delaying the final announcement on the result of the match.

The officials assembled to decide on India's appeal as trophies were removed from the ground and the fans also left the stadium.

After discussing the appeal for more than an hour, the jury declared that there was unintentional obstruction on part of Indian goalkeeper PR Sreejesh in the seventh second thus the re-take of the shot was justified.

New emblem of Tokyo 2020 Olympics unveiled

The new emblem of Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympic Games was unveiled featuring an indigo-coloured check in the design.

The logo features a circular Japanese traditional checkered pattern. Below the design are the words "Tokyo 2020" and under them the five interlocking Olympic rings, reports Xinhua.

The logo was chosen from a shortlist of four announced on April 8 after more than 14,599 entries were publicly accepted.

Tokyo 2020 organisers had to scrap a logo by Japanese designer Kenjiro Sano over its close resemblance of a theatre in the Belgian city of Liege created by designer Olivier Debie.

Sunrisers a cut above RCB, lift IPL 2016 trophy

Sunrisers Hyderabad bowlers put up an incredible performance to ruin Virat Kohli's fairytale season beating Royal Challengers Bangalore by 8 runs in a high-octane summit clash walking away with

their maiden Indian Premier League trophy, here tonight.

In a battle between IPL's best batting and bowling line-ups, the Orange Army came up trumps despite initial blitzkrieg from Chris Gayle and Kohli, defending their total of 208 for seven by restricting the home team to 200 for seven by restricting the home team to 200 for seven.

It was David Warner's batting and astute captaincy complemented by some inspirational death overs bowling by Mustafizur Rahaman (1/37 in 4 overs) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (0/25 in 4 overs) that clinched the issue.

Warner, who hit 69, finished second in run-getters' list with 848 runs. The turning point certainly would be the 24 runs that Ben Cutting (39 no and 2/35) got in the final over off Shane Watson's bowling during Sunrisers innings and then came back to dismiss a rampaging Gayle.

With 18 needed off last over, Bhuvneshwar, who bowled 13 dot balls gave only 9 runs. As the last ball was delivered, skipper Warner's joy knew no bounds with the entire team and dug-out joining him in wild celebrations.

Gayle (76 off 38 balls) and skipper Kohli (54 off 35 balls) had a scintillating opening stand of 114 in 10.3 overs as it looked like a cakewalk for the home team. But in the end, Kohli was the tragic hero once again after the WorldT20 in a tournament that will be remembered for his exploits.

Boxing legend Muhammad Ali passes away

Boxing legend Muhammad Ali, who was hospitalised following respiratory problems passed away. Ali, whose fame transcended sport during a remarkable heavyweight boxing career that spanned three decades, had been hospitalised in Phoenix, Arizona, area with a respiratory ailment this week.

Ali had been hospitalised several times in recent years, most recently in early 2015 when he was treated for a severe urinary tract infection initially diagnosed as pneumonia.

His last formal public appearance before that was in October when he appeared at the Sports Illustrated Tribute to Muhammad Ali at The Muhammad Ali Center in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, along with former opponents George Foreman and Larry Holmes.

Ali has suffered from Parkinson's for three decades, most famously trembling badly while lighting the Olympic torch in 1996 in Atlanta. Despite the disease, he kept up a busy appearance schedule until recently, though he has not communicated verbally in public for years.

An iconic figure who was at one point arguably the most recognised person in the world, Ali lived

quietly in the Phoenix area with his fourth wife, Lonnie, who he married in 1986.

Ali proclaimed himself “the greatest” - as well as “the boldest, the prettiest, the most superior, most scientific, most skillfullest.”

Few could argue with him at his peak in the 1960s. With his dancing feet and quick fists, he could - as he put it - float like a butterfly and sting like a bee. He was the first person to win the heavyweight championship three times.

Ali became much more than a colorful and interesting athlete. He spoke boldly against racism in the '60s, as well as the Vietnam War.

Ali was born in Louisville, Kentucky, on Jan. 17, 1942, as Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr., a name shared with a 19th century slavery abolitionist. He later changed his name after his conversion to Islam.

Saina Nehwal wins Australian Open Super Series title

Indian ace Saina Nehwal received a huge boost ahead of the Rio Olympics as she clinched her second Australian Open title after defeating China's Sun Yu in a thrilling three-game final of the Super Series badminton tournament in Sydney.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad eked out a 11-21 21-14 21-19 over the World No. 12 Sun in a fighting summit clash that lasted an hour and 11 minutes in Sydney.

London Olympics bronze medallist, Saina, who had beaten two world champions — Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon (2013) and China's Yihan Wang (2011) in the quarterfinals and semifinals —, thus clinched her maiden title of the season and pocketed a cheque of USD 56,250.

It is Saina's second Australian Open victory, having clinched the title in 2014 as well.

Real Madrid wins Champions League in penalty shootout

Cristiano Ronaldo did it again for Real Madrid, stepping forward to score a penalty and inflict another devastating loss in a Champions League final on rival Atletico Madrid.

For the second time in three finals, the biggest game in club soccer ended with Ronaldo sealing the victory.

Ronaldo's decisive spot kick in the shootout gave Real Madrid a 5-3 victory on penalties, following a 1-1 draw after extra time in final.

Two years ago, the Portuguese superstar's penalty had sealed a 4-1 extra-time win over Atletico and prompted the first of his provocative celebrations. Rising to the dramatic moment after a quiet game for him, Ronaldo sent goalkeeper Jan Oblak the wrong way seconds after Atletico defender Juanfran

had struck a post with his team's fourth kick. Real Madrid got its record-extending 11th European title and left Atletico with a bitter third loss in the continent's biggest game. In its two previous finals, Atletico gave up last-minute equalising goals. Simeone said he will consider his future at Atletico, where the combative Argentine has coached for five years.

Zidane has coached for less than five months, yet is already just the seventh man to both coach and play for champion teams in the competition's 61-year history. The France great, who scored the winning goal for Madrid in the 2002 final, joins an elite group that includes Johan Cruyff and Pep Guardiola.

Just like the 2014 final, a Madrid derby finished 1-1 after 90 minutes. This time, it was Real Madrid instead of Atletico that conceded a late equaliser.

India beats Zimbabwe; clinches series win

A dominant India predictably completed a 3-0 whitewash by bulldozing a sub-par Zimbabwe by 10 wickets in the final ODI cricket match in what turned out to be one of the most one-sided series in recent times.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's boys outclassed the hosts in all departments by first bowling them out for their lowest total of 123 in the series with Jasprit Bumrah grabbing 4/22 and then romping home in 21.5 overs.

Openers KL Rahul (63 not out) and debutant Faiz Fazal (55 not out) flayed with what seemed like a club-level bowling attack to guide India home. India also completed a hat-trick of whitewashes against the hosts, having won earlier ODI series by 5-0 and 3-0 margin in 2013 and 2015 when Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane led the sides respectively.

For Dhoni, there were two milestones that he achieved from the series. With 107 wins as captain, he equalled Allan Border for the second highest number of wins in ODI history behind Ricky Ponting (165). Also he became the first Indian wicketkeeper-batsman to complete 350 dismissals in 50-overs cricket.

Dhoni now stands fourth in the overall list behind Kumar Sangakkara (482 victims), Adam Gilchrist (472) and Mark Boucher (424 victims).

Novak Djokovic wins French Open, completes non-calendar Grand Slam

Novak Djokovic captured a first French Open at the 12th time of asking, becoming just the third man in history to hold all four Grand Slam titles at the same time.

The world number one downed old rival Andy

Murray 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 to claim a 12th career major and join Don Budge in 1938 and Rod Laver, in 1962 and 1969, as the only players to simultaneously possess the French Open, Australian Open, US Open and Wimbledon trophies.

Djokovic, 29, also put himself halfway to the calendar Grand Slam, last achieved by Laver 47 years ago.

Garbine Muguruza stuns Serena Williams to win French Open

Garbine Muguruza won her first Grand Slam title at the French Open defeating top seed and defending champion Serena Williams in the final.

Twelve years younger than the American at 22, and playing in the first claycourt final of her career, the Venezuelan-born Spaniard upset the odds to win 7-5, 6-4.

For Williams it was a second straight loss in a Grand Slam final and it wrecked her hopes once again of winning a 22nd Grand Slam title to draw level with Steffi Graf for most wins in the Open era, since 1968.

Leander Paes completes mixed doubles Career Slam with French Open win

Veteran Indian tennis star Leander Paes completed a 'Career Slam' in mixed doubles with Swiss partner Martina Hingis with a hard-fought win over compatriot Sania Mirza and Ivan Dodig.

The unseeded Indo-Swiss pair eked out a 4-6, 6-4, 10-8 win over the second seeds in the summit clash that lasted one hour and 28 minutes.

42-year-old Paes had won Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open titles in 2015 with Hingis. It was 18th Grand Slam title for Paes and 10th in the mixed doubles. For 35-year-old Hingis, it was Grand Slam title number 22nd and fifth trophy in the mixed doubles.

Nita Ambani, first Indian woman to be nominated to IOC

The new targeted recruitment process of International Olympic Committee (IOC) members, as per recommendation 38 of Olympic Agenda 2020 (OA2020), has facilitated the nomination of Nita Ambani as a candidate for the membership to the IOC.

According to the IOC, the OA2020 focuses on the roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement and also says that the 40 recommendations are like jigsaw puzzle pieces that, when put together, form a picture that shows the IOC safeguarding the uniqueness of the Olympic Games and strengthening sport in society.

Ms. Ambani is the founder and chairperson of the Reliance Foundation and she would be nomi-

nated, pending election, at the 129th IOC Session that will take place in Rio de Janeiro between August 2 and 4. Ms. Ambani can remain as IOC member till the age of 70.

Sharapova suspended for 2 years for doping

Maria Sharapova has been suspended for two years by the International Tennis Federation for testing positive for meldonium at the Australian Open. The ruling can be appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The five-time Grand Slam champion was provisionally suspended by the ITF in early March, when she announced at a news conference in Los Angeles that she failed a doping test in January. Sharapova said then she was not aware that the World Anti-Doping Agency had barred athletes from using meldonium, also known as mildronate, as of January 1. Sharapova said she first was prescribed the Latvian-made drug, typically used for heart conditions, for medical reasons in 2006.

Alastair Cook youngest to join the 10,000 club; breaks Sachin's record

Alastair Cook became the first England batsman to score 10,000 Test runs when he reached five against Sri Lanka on the fourth day of the second Test.

The England captain became just the 12th batsman — and the only one still playing Tests — in history to reach the landmark when he clipped Nuwan Pradeep for four through mid-wicket.

He is also the youngest to do so at 31 years and 157 days old, beating the previous record of Sachin Tendulkar (31 years and 326 days). It was Cook's 128th Test and 229th innings. — AFP

The 10,000 club - 15,921 runs: 200 Tests, Sachin Tendulkar

13,378: 168, Ricky Ponting

13,289: 166, Jacques Kallis

Anil Kumble is Team India's head coach

Anil Kumble has been named head coach of the Indian team for the next 12 months.

He will take charge at the squad's preparatory camp ahead of the upcoming tour of the West Indies next month.

Announcing the decision, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) chief Anurag Thakur said it was taken by "the president and secretary" after the Cricket Advisory Committee comprising Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and V.V.S. Laxman submitted "a few names".

Mr. Kumble edged out former team director Ravi Shastri after 57 aspirants entered the fray for the

coveted post.

Mr. Kumble, 45, with 619 wickets from 132 matches, is the third most successful bowler in Test history behind Muttiah Muralitharan (800) and Shane Warne (708).

Lionel Messi retires from international football
Ace footballer Lionel Messi announced retirement from International Football after Argentina's loss in Copa America final.

Chile stunned Argentina to win the Copa America Centenario in a penalty shootout as Messi's title curse struck again.

Messi, a five-time FIFA player of the year, winner of four Champions League titles and eight Spanish La Liga crowns with Barcelona, was crushed. Much of his nation had counted on him to bring home its first major title since 1993.

Playing two days after his 29th birthday, Messi lost a final for the third year in a row and the fourth time overall with Argentina.

A crowd of 82,076 filled MetLife Stadium the largest to see a soccer game in New Jersey and many wore his No. 10 jersey in Argentina's blue and white and Barcelona's navy and red.

Chile stun Argentina to lift Copa America title
Holders Chile stunned Argentina to win the Copa America Centenario in a penalty shootout as Lionel Messi's title curse struck again.

Messi blazed a penalty over the bar in the shootout before Lucas Biglia missed to leave Chile's Francisco Silva with the task of stroking home the winning spot-kick at the MetLife Stadium. It was a carbon copy of last year's Copa America final, also won by Chile on penalties after a goalless draw.

Argentina's players meanwhile were left disconsolate as they digested a third defeat in a major final following losses to Germany in the 2014 World Cup and Chile in last year's Copa.

The defeat also ensured Argentina's 23-year wait for a major title — and a first for five-time world player of the year Messi — continued.

The final had gone to penalties after finishing deadlocked at 0-0 after 120 minutes.

Both sides were reduced to 10 men in the first half as Brazilian referee Heber Lopes struggled to get a grip on an ill-tempered contest played in front of a crowd of 82,026.

Sanjeev Rajput wins silver in 50m Rifle 3 Positions

Veteran rifle shooter Sanjeev Rajput shrugged off the disappointment of missing out of Rio Olympics by bagging the men's 50m rifle 3 positions silver

medal on the seventh and concluding day of competitions at the ISSF World Cup. This is the 35-year old shooter's third World Cup medal. This was also India's second medal of the competition after pistol ace Jitu Rai's silver winning effort in the men's 10m air pistol.

Gurpreet Singh Sandhu makes history, plays in Europa League

Gurpreet Singh Sandhu's ground-breaking journey through uncharted territory reached the most important milestone as he became the first Indian footballer to play for the first team in the top-flight Europa League.

Standing at a towering 6 feet and four inches, the Indian national team goalkeeper started for Norwegian Tippeligaen club Stabaek FC in an Europa League qualifier against Welsh side Connah's Quay Nomads FC in an away match in Rhyl, Wales. The Europa League is a rung below the UEFA Champions League.

His night was, however, cut short by a hand injury that prompted a change after 28 minutes of play and brought into action Sayouba Mande, the team's first choice custodian till this match.

Sandhu, who signed for Stabaek in 2014, made headlines in May when he became the first Indian to start in the first team in a top-division league of Europe. In that match against IK Start in the Norwegian Tippeligaen, he kept a clean sheet in a 5-0 away victory.

Gurpreet is now the only Indian to play for the first team in a top-division league of Europe. Mohammed Salim, former captain Bhaichung Bhutia and current national skipper Sunil Chhetri have all played abroad, but they were never able to break into the first team.

Bengal footballer Salim played for Scottish top-tier side Celtic FC in 1936, but he did not feature in the premier division.

Bhutia played for English third division side Bury FC in 1999-2000 and current national skipper Chhetri played for the 'B' team of Sporting Lisbon in 2012. Sandhu, who is from Mohali in Punjab, has gone one step ahead.